

164 *People of the Blue Water*

133 Were they carved there by Those of Old? A short trip might give the answer.

We scrambled up the talus on one of the steepest trails I had ever climbed, followed a ledge until we came to many openings in the face of the wall, each a tiny doorway. Stooping, we passed through one of the doorways, but could not stand erect under the low ceiling. The sandstone walls were bare. The floor beneath our feet gave a hollow sound for the caves were in tiers; a row of such cavities was immediately below the ones on this level. The ledge formed a path on which the occupants could pass from one cave to another.

We returned to the ledge and looked down on the peaceful scene so far below: the village, bathed in dazzling sunlight . . . men drying buckskin . . . women weaving baskets or gambling fiercely under their porch shelters . . . a wide pool, dark with the bodies of frolicking children. What need had these people for dome-shaped holes in their canyon wall, holes that bore no evidence of recent use? Yet across the canyon on a flat-topped bluff stood a fort; through the portholes in its masonry, the canyon could be defended from wall to wall—with help from these ledges.

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714 With the battlefield a panorama below us it was easy to visualize the battles that had been fought on the canyon floor, Gentle Annie and others of her generation unwilling participants. In preparation, the Havasupai armor-bearers hastily scrambled into their armor—buckskin robes falling from their necks almost to the feet protecting the body front and rear, a wad of buckskin in the left hand to protect the face, a roll of it about the neck, the right hand free to wield hatchet or club. The shield-bearers, carrying strong wooden sticks from which buckskin aprons depended, accompanied the armor-bearers in the forefront of the battle or, in retreat, covered the rear. The shield-bearers were of particular importance, for the enemies' arrows clung to their buckskin shields or fell harmlessly from them. Armed men, crouched in the protection of these shields, sent their salvos against the enemy at every opportunity, while the armor-bearers clubbed and beat the invaders.

Talking Stones 163

Fortunately, this tribe, unlike the roving Indians of the desert region, had never come in serious conflict with the United States Army. Had they done so, I am inclined to think the Havasupai may have won, at least the first bout. For an American soldier, confronted by enemy whose armor resembled buckskin nightshirts, and whose shields—their only protection from bullets—were tanned deerskins, would have been so convulsed with laughter that he could not fire a shot. 648

However, the Havasupai had one weapon that no enemy laughed off—their poisoned arrows. Juices extracted from the Jimson weed and other toxic plants, combined with the poison of scorpions and poisonous insects, cemented to the arrow tip with glue from roasted soapweed leaves, made a deadly weapon. They were expert marksmen, and if the flesh was penetrated by one of these poisoned arrows, there was no known antidote. 411

At the approach of the enemy, women and children scurried up the wall to their huge stores of food on a higher level, saved for just such an emergency. Men fought from their homes until driven from the canyon floor, some retreating to the fort to shoot arrows at the pursuers or to roll stones down upon them. Others took to the ledges along the walls, running ahead of the desert pirates, slaughtering them with poisoned arrows. But many, according to the Indians, retreated to this ledge with its little scooped-out rooms in which ammunition and food could be stored and the wounded cared for. Crossfire from the fort and this ledge could annihilate the invaders in this wider section of the canyon, which held the main part of the village. Protected by their armored men and their shield-bearers, the Havasupai warriors descended for hand-to-hand fighting, while archers slaughtered the fleeing enemy from stations along the walls. 726
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By nightfall, the canyon was cleared. Women and children scrambled down from their high perches, joining the men in caring for the wounded, cleaning up the village, cremating the dead and repairing, as best they could, the damage. Then they held the victory dance, as bloodchilling as had been the conflict itself. 727

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152 It was a gala occasion of feasting and dancing. Faces were grotesquely painted, costumes and ornaments were designed to heighten the emotional orgy. Enemy scalps, taken in the fight, were washed and cleaned by the old women, then tied to the tip of an upright pole. The people danced round and round the pole, patting their mouths, giving a more savage note to the victory song, working themselves into a frenzy while they harangued the scalps, blaming them for the raid. "We do not steal from your home. We stay here and make our gardens grow. You kill our people. You steal our food, our blankets, our horses, our women. Now you cannot eat. You cannot sleep warm at night. You are dead."

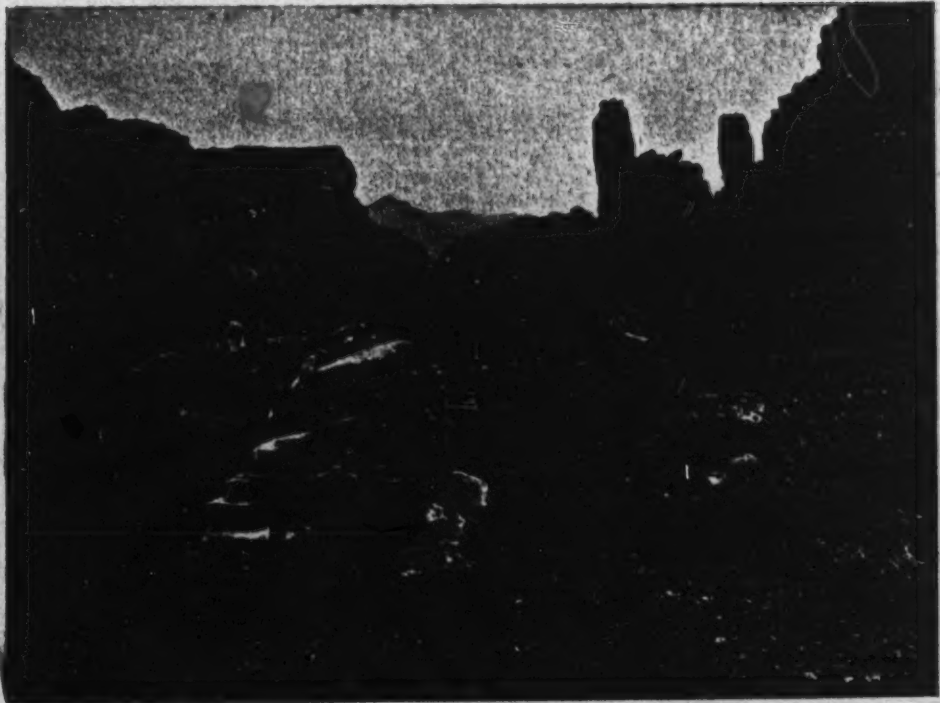
When Gentle Annie or any of the older Indians spoke of the victory dance, emotions ran deep, their eyes kindled with a fierce light. Again they were driving back the hated foe, running the scalping knife around the hairline of his abandoned dead, peeling off a scalp.

648 Eventually, the Great Father in Washington sent his soldiers to clear the canyon of all hostile Indians and settle for all time the matter of raids. We found the names of soldiers and those of army officers, including General Crook's carved on the canyon walls.

712 We retraced our steps down the trail feeling that, in those little rooms, we ourselves had lived their tribal wars. We crossed over to the fort that stood on an outjutting bluff, impregnable on three precipitous sides; on the fourth side, a narrow trail wound steeply to its top. At several points along the trail we found piles of stones left from their last battle, ready to be rolled down on an enemy. We picked up arrowheads, but could not determine whether they had been dropped there by the Havasupai or shot there by the enemy, nor if they had been smeared with the deadly poison. We peeped through the portholes, took pictures of the place and departed.

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823 High up on the wall to our left were two lonely figures, the Buck and the Squaw. The Indians had told me the legend of their plight, so we stopped to see how closely the two stones resembled the figures of a man and a woman. At a time when the Apache had

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James T-5 (ca. 1900) 1903
NT14 Plateau Tumans NT14
Havasupai



HAVASUPAI FORTRESS AND HUB-GLI-I-WA, OR ROCK FIGURES.

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133 This is where the ceremonial dances of the Havasupais
778 take place.

776 On the summit of the wall on the other side of the
canyon from the Hue-gil-i-wa are two stone objects, one
named Hue-a-pa-a, and the one farther down the can-
yon, Hue-pu-keh-i. These are great objects of rever-
ence, for they represent the ancestors of the Havasupai
race. Hue-a-pa-a—the man—has a child upon his
back and two more by his side, and he is calling to his
wife—Hue-pu-keh-i—to hurry along, as the baby is
hungry and needs his dinner. The full breasts of the
stone woman show that she is a nursing mother.

133 Slightly below these stone figures, and on the right-
772 hand side of the canyon, is the old fort, where in the
days of fighting the Havasupais were wont to retire
when attacked. The fort is impregnable on three sides,
being precipitous, and on the fourth is accessible only
up a narrow trail, which is guarded by piles of rocks
which are ready to be tumbled, even by a woman, upon
the heads of foes who attempt to ascend. The fortifi-
cations and stones for defence still remain, but it is
many years since they were used for their original
purposes.

000 One's mind becomes very active as he looks upon
this tribe of Indians and thinks of their traditions, his-
tory, and life. So far, their almost entirely isolated
[648] condition has been their preservation, although, sad to
say, much of their earlier contact with our civilization
was not of the best character.

Even in this land of our boasted Christianity it is true
that the strong prey upon the weak. The domination
of physical force is giving way to the domination of
mental force, but which is the greater evil? Why